The reasons for losses in the last two years are :

(i) Sluggish demand for steel;

(ii) Greater competition from imports & enhanced supplies in domestic markets;

(iii) Increase in input costs;

(iv) Higher interest and depreciation charges on account of capitalisation of expenditure on modernisation of BSL.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Payment of workers in HSCL

2564. SHRI JIBON ROY : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the workers employed in HSCL do not get regular payments by the Management;

(b) if so, the number of months for which different centres have not received payment of salary and other dues;

(c) the reasons for the delay of the payment; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure regular payment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The default in Salaries, Gratuity and P.F. in respect of different units of HSCL is as noted below :

Salaries	—	On an average, 9 months
Gratuity	—	14 months
P.F.	—	8 months

(c) Due to slowdown in the Steel Sector, the revenue earned by HSCL is much less than the net expenses on salaries and wages alone.

(d) A Financial Restructuring-cum-Financial-Assistance Package has been approved for Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited (HSCL) in July, 1999. It is expected that with the implementation of the various components of this package, the financial health of the company will improve.

Appointment of Director in SAIL Board

2565 SHRI JIBON ROY : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has appointed Director on SAIL Board, from Ispat Group;

(b) if so, what is the name of the incumbent; and

(c) what are the reasons for such appointment when it is a known fact that ISPAT group of industries is a direct competitor of SAIL ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise

Privatisation of some Departments of Rourkela Steel Plant

2566. SHRI RAMCHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to privatise some important Departments of Rourkela Steel Plant of Orissa; and

(b) the total number of workers likely to be affected by the privatisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY) :

(a) and (b) Steel Authority of India Limited has initiated a process of conversion into joint ventures, while protecting jobs of existing employees of the following assets.

- 2×60 MW Captive Power Plant-II at the Rourkela Steel Plant and the Central Power Training Institute at Rourkela

- Fertiliser Plant at Rourkela Steel Plant.